

Can you imagine if you were a voter today in Alexandria, VA, and, before you could reach your polling place, the media begins to report that, based on results in Richmond, Norfolk, Roanoke, and other areas, the Governor's race was over? Obviously, this might discourage you from making any extra effort in casting your vote. Although this is a preposterous example for Virginia or other individual States, this is exactly what happens every 4 years during most Presidential elections.

It is demoralizing to be a voter on the West Coast on the way to the polls and hear on the car radio that the Presidential election is over—without your vote. In America's West, reports of results from the East is one significant factor in depressing voter turnout in Presidential elections. Certainly, Congress cannot restrict the freedom of the press to report factual information. However, we can take steps to delay the release of election results until after they would impact voters in States where polls are still open.

Today I am introducing the National Election Fairness Act, which will restrict State and local election officials from releasing Presidential election results until after all polls have closed in the continental United States. This bill will not restrict the ability of news organizations to conduct exit polling or employ other methods to predict election outcomes, but will merely prevent official Presidential election results from being announced before western polling places have closed.

I believe this limited measure will help to increase voter turnout in Presidential elections in my home State of California and in other States in the Central, Mountain, and Pacific time zones. I hope my colleagues will join me in supporting this bill and taking steps to ensure a more equitable election process that values the votes of a voter in California or Washington as much as a voter in Florida or New York.

REPUBLICAN LEADERSHIP OPPOSES HEALTH REFORM—WORKS WITH FOR-PROFIT INSURERS TO DESTROY CONSUMER PROTECTIONS

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 4, 1997

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, following is a memo from a staffer at the for-profit insurance lobby demonstrating how the Republican leadership is soliciting money to defeat consumer protections designed to provide a minimal floor of quality and protection for America's families.

Once again, those who profit off of insuring only those who are healthy and who resist any effort to provide minimal consumer protections reveal their cynical hand. Undoubtedly we will be flooded with literature in the coming months trashing proposals to require insurers to comply with simple rules against gagging what doctors can tell their patients and others, minimal consumer protections.

HEALTH INSURANCE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA
MEMO

Date: October 22, 1997.

To: Michael Fortier.

From: Melody Harned.

Subject: Government Run Healthcare.

The message we are getting from House and Senate Leadership is that we are in a war and need to start fighting like we're in a war.

Republican Leadership is now engaged on this issue and is issuing strong directives to all players in the insurance and employer community to get activated. Earlier this week, I met with Keith Hennessey (Sen. Lott) along with the NFIB coalition. Hennessey will be working with House and Senate leadership to coordinate the advocacy effort. Senator Lott is well aware of the issue of mandates, incremental health care reform, etc., and is very concerned. Lott told Senator Jeffords that he could not introduce his "Quality Bill" this session and was advised to work less with Sen. Kennedy and more with his fellow Republicans on the Senate Labor Committee. Sen. Lott has also spoken with all Republicans on the Senate Labor Committee and told them to get involved and express their concerns. Sen. Lott also said that Senate Republicans need a lot of help from their friends on the outside, "Get off your butts, get off your wallets". Keith Hennessey believes that it is critical that employer/insurer grassroots occur during recess (Nov & Dec) so that Members are prepared when they come back to town in January.

At the NFIB Coalition meeting today, Mark Isokowitz (NFIB) informed the group that he had been summoned to the Hill by Missy Jenkins (Rep. Gingrich), Dean Clancy (Rep. Arney), Stacey Hughes (Sen. Nickles) and Keith Hennessey (Sen. Lott). Staff gave him four directives to take back to the coalition: (1.) Hold a briefing for Republican health LAs in 2 weeks; (2.) Implement heavy grassroots during recess; (3.) Meet with groups of Senators (e.g., Sen. Coverdell health care coalition) to report on what each organization is doing to fight these bills; and (4.) Write the definitive piece of paper trashing all these bills. Mark Isokowitz's overall impression from the meeting was that the Leadership was looking for signs of serious commitment on our part before they go out on a limb.

HONORING UNIVERSOUL CIRCUS

HON. KEN BENTSEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 4, 1997

Mr. BENTSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the Universoul Circus as they bring their successful tour of the United States to the Power Center in Houston, in my district. Their production has entertained families across the country and is benefiting communities economically as well.

The Universoul Circus is the first touring African-American circus in the United States in more than 100 years. It follows in the footsteps of Ephraim Williams, who in 1885 began the first all-African-American traveling show. What began with a horse doing math tricks quickly grew into three touring circuses, leading Williams to be called the Black P.T. Barnum. With the creation of the Universoul Circus, Cedric Walker has built on that tradition and brought it to a new generation.

Since its humble beginning in 1994, in a rented tent in a parking lot in Atlanta, Universoul has grown in attendance and significance. Today, it performs to sold-out crowds across the country and has become a source of family entertainment and community

pride that will last for decades to come. Mr. Walker is committed to bringing the circus to neighborhoods that have been traditionally underserved by the entertainment industry. The group bypasses suburban arenas for our Nation's poorer neighborhood, bringing over 100 jobs with it at each stop along its tour. By the end of their 18-city tour, the Universoul Circus will have given back more than \$5 million to the communities they have visited.

Like other circuses, the Universoul Circus showcases attractions from aerial and equestrian acts to wild animals and clown skits. Universoul, however, is much, much more than an ordinary circus. It spotlights the largest number of African-American performers in circus history and features urban themes, state-of-the-art lighting, and high-energy music under its big top. Performers pay tribute to such heroes as the renowned Buffalo Soldier cavalymen, the Negro League ballplayers, and the famed Tuskegee Airmen. For many of these performers, these acts are the first opportunity they have had to showcase their tremendous talents. Through their performances, they are honoring the struggles of the past while working to build a better future for our communities.

The Universoul Circus was developed to provide quality entertainment to all families, but also to give children examples of positive African-American role models. Walker and his performers include lessons in African-American history at each performance and encourage children to take the ringmaster's pledge to love their families and say no to drugs. Instead of avoiding difficult subjects such as slavery, stereotypes, and racism, the Universoul Circus uses these tragedies as tools, to show that, through strength of mind and spirit, we can overcome all obstacles.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the Universoul Circus for its success both in providing exciting, wholesome entertainment for our families and strong role models for our children.

TRIBUTE TO "WE WANT AMERICA BACK" RALLY

HON. ROBERT B. ADERHOLT

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 4, 1997

Mr. ADERHOLT. Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate Pastor Billy Robinson and everyone involved with the "We Want America Back" rally on October 23, 1997. Over 700 people were there to stand up for the traditional values that made this country great. It is important to note that the mayor of Jasper, Don Goetz, remarked that it was the biggest crowd ever at the Sherer auditorium.

It is also noteworthy that this was not a political rally, or a denominational rally. It was an opportunity for people to stand up for what is right. In fact, it was the many people from different denominations and both political parties joining together that made this rally so successful.

Although I could not attend in person due to my official duties in Washington, I strongly support the efforts of those I represent to improve the moral climate in this country today, and reassert the vital importance of traditional values. I look forward to continuing to work in support of this cause.